1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

areas to go to work on large-scale construction projects. In this region the following trends can be observed: 166

A. Migration to Industrial Centers

The Central-South Region has been designated in Peking's five-year plan as a center for steel and iron industries. Many cities in this region were marked for expansion. In early 1954 modernization and public works construction programs were started in the nine cities of Chengchow, Loyang, and Hsin-hsiang, in Honan Province; Wuhan and Huang-shih in Hupeh Province; Hsiang-t'an and Chu-chou in Hunan Province; and Canton and Chan-chiang in Kwangtung Province. (See chapter on Geographical Setting.) Of these cities, Huang-shih and Chan-chiang are both newly developed centers. Huang-shih, situated on the Yangtze River about fifty miles east of Wuchang, is the river port for the coal mines of Tayeh, and has been described as already having expanded from a one-street town to one of six streets in a few years.[7] In the city of Hsiang-t'an a new textile factory is reported to be under construction.[8] Toward these centers the migration of population in the region is generally oriented. 166 178

B. Labor Exodus to Construction Centers

Large numbers of workers and their families have been moving near the government-operated construction projects in this region. The partially completed Ching-chiang Flood Diversion Project in wes- 166 464

7. Jen-min Jih-pao [People's Daily], Peking, April 19, 1954, p. 2.

8. Ibid., February 21, 1954, p. 2.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

tern Hupeh Province, the steel bridges across the Han and Yangtze rivers, and other projects at various stages of completion have been drawing tens of thousands of people. Press reports in Communist China reveal that the general plan seems to be to move these "migrant workers" from project to project, according to the schedule of completion. No end of these projects is in sight. (For details, see related chapters in Economic Section.)

166
464

C. Settling on New and Reclaimed Farms

166

The development of collective farms by reclamation of wastelands in Honan, Kwangtung, and elsewhere in this region calls for the settlement on the new farms of farm laborers drawn from varying sources -- surplus rural population, convicts sentenced to forced labor, and the unemployed from large cities. Migration does not flow in one direction, nor is it confined within the Central-South Region. Not a few of the migrants have been directed to the northeast in Heilungkiang Province, to the north in Inner Mongolia, to Sinkiang Province in the northwest, and south to the Vietminh territory in Indo-China.[9] Anti-Communist sources have reported that from April 16 to May 10, 1955, 60,000 people representing 15,000 families had been moved from the Yellow River area, including Honan Province, to the Northeast Region. The same source also reported that 5,000,000 people were to be sent from Hupeh, Hunan, Kiangsi, and other provinces, according to Communist plan.[10] These reports are generally borne out by information from Communist sources, although Communist re-

9. Ya-chou Tien-hsün [The Asia Foundation News Bulletin], San Francisco, October 20, November 11, Dec. 2, 1954; Jan. 6, Feb. 21, Apr. 21, May 17, 1955.

10. Ibid., May 27, 1955.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

LABOR

I. ORGANIZATION OF TRADE UNIONS

464

The number of wage-earners and salaried employees (exclusive of farm labor) in the six provinces and two municipalities of Central-South China amounted to 23,000,000 in October 1950. From 1950 to 1952 industrial production trebled, with a corresponding increase in the number of workers. Since the launching of the Communist's first Five-Year Plan and the building of three new industrial districts in this region,[1] the working class of Central-South China has had a greater share of the burden of national reconstruction of China under the Communist regime.

467

Having had experience in labor organization in other regions which had been "liberated" before Central-South China, the Communists encountered relatively few difficulties in their work of unionization. By October 1950, as many as 60 per cent of the workers of this area had been unionized.[2] The Preparatory Committee of the Central-South Federation of Trade Unions was established in July 1950, but was dissolved October 1952. The Central-South

1. The three new industrial districts are: (1) the Chengchow-Loyang area of Honan Province; (2) the Wuhan area in Hupeh Province; and (3) the central part of Hunan Province.

2. Kung-jen Jih-pao [Workers' Daily], Peking, Oct. 3, 1950, p. 4.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

VII. UNEMPLOYMENT

464

Since the Constitution of Communist China guarantees the right to work to everyone, the Chinese Communists have always maintained that "unemployment" constitutes a problem generated by the nature of a capitalist society and that it will disappear eventually.

In July 1950, there were 396,404 unemployed workers registered with labor offices or local governments in Central-South China after the Political Administration Council had issued the "Provisional Measures Concerning Unemployment Relief"[43] on June 17, 1950. The methods of the Communist unemployment relief included substitution of work for relief, a back-to-the-village drive, an "increase in production," and "self-help." Under these methods, recruits from among the unemployed workers in the Wuhan Area did most of the municipal public work from June 1950 to the end of 1951. In the spring of 1952, the Wuhan municipal government organized more than 100,000 unemployed workers and sent them to the Ching River Harnessing Project.[44]

Canton, like Wuhan, is a city with serious unemployment problems. Communists here tried every effort to reduce the number of unemployed workers, but peasants kept flocking to the city. The "Back-to-the Village" Campaign was renewed recently. The authorities of Kwangtung Province

---

43. Chinese Worker Monthly, July 15, 1950, pp. 10-12.

44. Yangtze Daily, Sept. 30, 1952, p. 2.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

464

issued a notice calling for the cessation of the flood of peasants into cities where the evacuation of the unemployed is going on. Any peasant who wants to leave his village must do so with reason and only with the permission of his local peasant's association.[45] According to the Chinese Communists, the unchecked flow of peasants into cities is the main cause of the unemployment which endangers economic stability and national defense.[46]

VIII. THE FIVE-YEAR-PLAN AND CHINESE LABOR

466

The first step toward preparing China for the Communist first Five-Year-Plan was the tightening of Party control over trade unions, which were considered by the Communist as spheres of Party influence or as a "transmission belt" between the Party and the masses.[47] In the early 1950's, trade unions under the leadership of Li Li-san were striving to strike some balance between the interests of the workers and the requirements of the production plan. It was in this period that many reports about the establishment of workers' hospitals cultural centers, creches, sanatoria, and rest homes appeared in Communist newspapers. After the Seventh All-China Congress of Trade Unions held in Peking in May 1953, Li was replaced by Lai Jo-yü. One criticism of Li was that his "leadership of the union has led it away from leadership of the Party by treating the trade union as the highest form of

45. Asia Foundation Bulletin, Sept. 29, 1952, p. 2.
46. Union Research Service, Hong Kong, Sept. 16, 1955.
47. People's China, June 7, 1953, p. 13.